

DX LISTENING DIGEST 3-103, June 9, 2003  
edited by Glenn Hauser, ghauser@hotmail.com

Items from DXLD may be reproduced and re-reproduced only if full credit be maintained at all stages and we be provided exchange copies. DXLD may not be reposted in its entirety without permission.

[continued from 3-102]

#### \*\* U S A. CARDINAL COMMENTS

``The FCC's decision was the product of a corrupt process that was awash in special-interest money, and that saw industries that are supposed to be regulated telling the regulators how to proceed. The Center for Public Integrity recently revealed that over the past eight years, media companies and their associations paid for 2,500 travel junkets by FCC commissioners and staffers, at a cost of \$2.8 million. The Center also revealed that FCC commissioners, their aides and top staffers hosted 71 off-the-record meetings with industry executives in the months leading up to today's vote. At the same time, only five meetings were held with organizations representing the public interest. Already, watchdog groups and members of Congress are calling for investigations of the cozy relationship between the FCC and the firms that will benefit from these rules changes.``

--- Mega Media Madness by John Nichols & Josh Silver, TomPaine.com

``The rap on Clear Channel is that the company has homogenized radio. A commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission even mocked media consolidation as 'Clear Channelization.' [John] Hogan [chief executive officer of Clear Channel Communications] is shocked - shocked - at any such insinuation. He says it's a misunderstanding. There are no national play lists. The company leaves decisions in the hands of local managers, he insists. . . . Hogan said radio is less consolidated than any other medium because there are still 4,500 station owners, 3,800 of them with a single outlet. That argument is debatable in an industry in which his company and Viacom's Infinity Radio control upwards of half the revenue.``

--- Dan Haar, CTnow.com

``What practical, real world experience do we have to guide us? Radio deregulation gives us powerful and relevant lessons. When Congress and the Commission removed some of the radio concentration protections, we experienced massive, and largely unforeseen, consolidation. Very quickly after taking actions for radio like those we will take today for television and newspapers, there was a 34 percent reduction in the number of radio station owners. Diversity of programming suffered. Homogenized music and standardized programming crowded out local and regional talent. Creative local artists found it evermore difficult to

obtain play time on the air. Editorial opinion polarized. Competition in many towns became non-existent as a few companies -- in some cases a single company -- bought up virtually every station in the market. This experience should terrify us as we consider visiting upon television and newspapers what we have inflicted upon radio. ``Clear Channelization`` of the rest of the American media will harm our country.``

--- FCC Commissioner Michael Copps (Democrat)

``Simply and obviously put, the charming pro-corporate FCC vote enthusiastically slaps all-American ideas of diversity and free speech and open-ended dialogue and dissent, and does everything to promote ideas of more and more benumbed media voices owned by fewer and fewer companies that couldn't care one whit less about anything but profit and control and the further consolidation of power.``

--- Mark Morford, SFGate.com

``When you combine what's available on the Internet with a media market offering hundreds of TV channels and soon, satellite radio, it's hard to believe that fiddling with conventional-media ownership caps will crimp the flow and variety of information. Today's technology and the human urge to defy received wisdom will always carve a path to an audience. Once let loose in the marketplace, telling facts and valid insights can't be ignored by mainstream media or these media will run the risk of diminished credibility.``

--- E. Thomas McClanahan, Kansas City Star

``It's a cruel, ironic joke. The rise of cable TV and the Internet were supposed to democratize the media and give us many voices and numerous points of view. Instead, market forces and deregulation have clobbered diversity. The networks and cable channels have the same owners ó Hollywood studios, mainly ó and the most popular Web sites for news are those of organizations firmly established before the Web was spun.``

--- Bob Edwards, NPR ``Morning Edition`` anchor

``Predicting the demise of Western civilization over an FCC decision to allow a single owner to hold TV stations reaching 45 percent of American households, instead of 35 percent, and to own more than one TV station in a market, might have made some sense in 1968. In those days, few American cities had more than three stations, and many had only one or two. Now the vast majority of Americans ñ about 90 percent ñ can choose from 60 channels or more through cable or satellite.``

--- Glenn Garvin, Miami Herald

``The proposed changes are such a threat to First Amendment freedoms that even some Republicans on Capitol Hill have been brave enough to oppose them. . . . Never mind that a diversity of voices ó voices with

the ability to be heard is integral to a democracy. While Powell and his supporters claim that the existence of dozens, even hundreds of channels on cable and satellite systems proves there's diversity unbound, Powell's critics note that the diversity is a mere illusion if only five fat companies own all those channels.''

--- Tom Shales, Washington Post

''What about the vaunted 500-channel universe of cable TV saving us? Well, 90 percent of the top cable channels are owned by the same giants that own the TV networks and the cable systems. More channels are great. But when they're all owned by the same people, cable doesn't protect localism, editorial diversity, or competition. And those who believe the Internet alone will save us from this fate should realize that the dominating Internet news sources are controlled by the same media giants who control radio, TV, newspapers, and cable. So, how does it promote localism, diversity and competition to allow, as we will allow by our action today, more media concentration in the more than 175 markets with over 90 percent of the American population?''

--- FCC Commissioner Michael Powell (Democrat)

''I'm opposed to the changes, but I'm much more upset that this has not produced enough conversation and dialogue. The way Michael Powell has gone about it is to hide the issues as much as possible, organizing it to avoid debate and hearings, and getting it done largely under the cover of night.''

--- Barry Diller, president, USA Studios and media mogul

''Those opposing today's order have also emphasized that four companies air the programming that is chosen by approximately 75 percent of viewers during prime time. To me, the critical fact is that these providers control no more than 25 percent of the broadcast and cable channels in the average home, even apart from the Internet and other pipelines. Given these other viewing options, I can only presume that this means that Americans are watching these providers because they prefer their content, not because they lack alternatives. It would be anathema to the First Amendment to regulate media ownership in an effort to steer consumers toward other programming. By the same token, concerns about the degradation of broadcast content do not justify government manipulation of consumer choice. ''Degradation'' is just an elitist way of saying programming that one does not like. While I support adopting prophylactic regulations in the interest of ensuring that consumers have ample choice --- as we have done today -- - I refuse to pour one ounce of cement to support a structure that dictates to the American people what they should watch, listen to, or think.''

--- Kathleen Q. Abernathy, FCC Commissioner (Republican)

``History shows that when you borrow a lot of money to buy new properties, you plow profits back into debt service and you cut costs. And viewers suffer.``

--- Andrew Jay Schwartzman, executive director, Media Access Project

``This FCC action will extinguish the substantial consumer benefits brought on by radio deregulation in 1996. Just ten years ago, nearly 60 percent of the nation's radio stations were operating in the red, cutting news budgets and laying off employees. Deregulation changed all that. But instead of letting radio stations find better and more innovative ways to serve their listeners, the FCC is intent on turning the clock back to a time when the industry was incapable of providing consumers the variety of programming it does today.``

--- Mark Mays, president & chief operating officer, Clear Channel Communications

``In larger markets, one owner can combine the cable system, three television stations, 8 radio stations, the dominant newspaper, and the leading Internet provider, not to mention cable networks, magazine publishers, and programming studios.``

--- FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein (Democrat)

#### Commentary --- THE NEW FCC OWNERSHIP CAPS: A BAD ENOUGH TRAIN WRECK

The FCC's new ownership cap regulations were not the train wreck many had feared, but they were nonetheless a train wreck. Most of the new regulations concerned television. The cap for the maximum audience a corporation can cover with its owned and operated television stations rose from 35% to 45%. The same company can now own a newspaper and television and radio stations in the same town in major and undersize markets.

For radio, the FCC will now reconfigure its definition of a market from contour determined to the Arbitron definition of a radio market. This will be a measure that shifts somewhat the number of stations in a given market that can be owned by one corporation. Further, the noncommercial FM's will now be included in the tally on which the new method of determining the caps for a given market is based. This is an insidious change that none of the trade press caught. Noncommercial FM's have small audiences. Add the ratings of all the noncommercial FM's in a market together and you will seldom reach the sum of the ratings of the top two or three commercial stations.

This means that if there are 5 noncommercial stations and 20 commercial stations in a given market, the number of stations a corporation can own in the market is now based on 25 and not 20. If the new method allows them to own one more station in the market, that means they will certainly reach more of the real audience than they

would seem to under the new FCC rules, because a commercial station typically has a greater audience. Recall that this concerns only one corporation; there may be two or three others that among them divide up all the commercial stations.

Chairman Michael Powell railroaded these changes through. He defied a crescendoing public opinion against it (750,000 messages), ignored the protests of the two Democratic FCC Commissioners that such a monumental change should follow a national series of public hearings. The FCC was invaded all the while by a number of radio megacorporation executives who successfully pleaded their cause.

For all that, the new measures did not go far enough for Clear Channel Communications' chairman Mark Mays (the company owns more than 1,200 stations and bought some more this past week), Viacom's Mel Karmazin, and Louisiana Congressman Billy Tauzin (Republican). Congressman Tauzin wanted even more permissive caps, and Mr. Karmazin is hinting at legal action. It was his company that persuaded the Federal judges that Viacom's freedom of speech was being hindered by the previous FCC caps. We have here a mix of greed and stupidity.

Even some Republicans and conservatives were unhappy about the new rules. Senator John McCain (Republican, Arizona) told a reporter that he has since moved from total deregulator to an uncertain position. Senator Trent Lott (Republican, Georgia) was and remains opposed to more deregulation, and has taken the matter up with other senators. Smaller radio and television corporations oppose the new regulations; it is difficult for them to compete now for advertising dollars, given the sweetheart discounts offered by megacorporations, who have also resorted to computerized stations, voice-tracking, skeletal local staffs, and remotely originated programming to effect economy of operation. Groups as disparate as the National Rifle Association and the Consumers Union, musicians and recording organizations, have protested the sale. So have Ted Turner and Barry Diller, both media moguls and very successful. Turner wrote in USA Today that, given the present FCC ownership permissiveness, he could not have started his broadcasting empire today.

Fact 1: According to Senator McCain, 85% of the media are owned by 5 megacorporations.

Fact 2: Nielsen reports that television is the major source of news for 34% of the population.

Fact 3: Five major media companies (AOL Time Warner, Viacom, Walt Disney, News Corp. and General Electric), spent \$24.6 million in lobbying the past two years.

Fact 4: Clear Channel Communications owns over 1,200 stations and is still buying more; its founder says he wants to own over 2,000. The company owns 6 of the 8 stations in Minot, North Dakota. 30% of total

radio revenues go into its coffers each year.

So what? you say. What does this have to do with Catholic radio? Apart from the fact that we shall all wind up living in an information- and entertainment-impooverished society when this crop of ownership limits starts to bear fruit, we still need to be concerned. Since the Federal Courts have struck down previous, more restrictive FCC ownership limits, we have no guarantees that these sorry judges will not strike them down again, finding for the media megacorporations, a decision that would lead to even looser ownership caps.

Prices of radio stations would soar even higher than their astronomical status, putting them out of the reach of lay groups and the rare diocese. Already the FCC has ``frozen`` all applications for station sales until the Office of Management of the Budget approves its new form 314. The OMB typically takes 6 to 12 weeks to do so. During this interval, how many owners who have been willing to sell to a Catholic group will no longer want to? Who knows that the fetching prices will be by then? Who knows what big megamedia will counteroffer a more attractive price to the seller? If you think this is remote, consider that, even before these new regulations, one Catholic group has already experienced just this problem.

--- Michael Dorner

#### WHO OWNS WHAT --- THE BIG FIVE

AOL Time Warner: AOL, Time Life Books, CNN, Warner Brothers, Time magazine and its fleet; Atlanta Braves, others

Viacom: CBS, Paramount, MTV, Blockbuster, Simon & Schuster, TNN, CMT< UPN, Comedy Center, United International Pictures, Infinity Radio, Black Entertainment Television.

Walt Disney: ABC, Miramax, NBA.com, Disneyland, Disneyworld, Hyperion Books, ESPN, ABC Family Channel, Radio Disney, others.

News Corp.: Fox, Fox News, TV Guide, The Weekly Standard, New York Post, Los Angeles Dodgers, Harper Collins books, New York Post, many newspapers around the world.

General Electric: NBC, MSNBC, History Channel, Bravo, Telemundo.  
(Catholic Radio Update June 9 via DXLD)

\*\* U S A. REC OPEN LETTER TO REP. MAURICE D. HINCHEY (D-NY)

Hon. Maurice D. Hinchey,

First of all, on behalf of REC Networks, I would like to personally

thank you for taking the stand that you are on the media ownership issue.

You appear to be one of the few who are not addressing strictly television ownership but also radio ownership issues. Unfortunately, unless you live in a remote Western community, then your chances of independent ownership of radio station is almost non-existent.

Although I am not a constituent of your area, I do have some small ties to the Hudson Valley area, but this media issue is not just an Upstate issue, but is a issue of national importance.

It is my understanding, you are currently crafting legislation, which will, in part, reverse the FCC's June 2, 2003 decision on media ownership.

Please keep in mind that there are other ownership issues that are not getting the proper focus that they should be getting. These ownership issues are related to Non-commercial stations and the future of local low power radio.

For example, one single organization, Calvary Chapel of Twin Falls Idaho, have two full power FM stations in the same town but they have a network of over 700 translators (either in operation, under construction or applied for). These translators (relay stations) are in communities across the country, from Florida to Hawaii. This is due to a loop hole that allows a licensee of a non-commercial FM station to set up a translator and program it via satellite (vs. over the air reception that is required of commercial stations). Although this rule was intended to bring educational programming into areas not served by full power FM stations (such as in the mountainous western states and remote places such as Alaska), organizations such as Calvary have exploited this loop hole by setting up all of these translators.

Another organization, Educational Media Foundation has over 100 full power FM stations (either in operation or under construction) across the country.

All of these stations carry very little to no local content. In the case of the translators, they are not required to monitor local Emergency Alert System (EAS) broadcasts. This means that anyone listening to these stations will not be warned of local weather, evacuation notices or local Amber Alerts.

To make matters even worse, the FCC opened up a filing window for new translator applications in mid-March. Of the 13,000+ applications that were filed, over 5,000 of them were from a single organization operating under two different fronts. This organization does not have

any licensed FM stations (either on the air or under construction), many of the applications were defective (they would cause interference to other stations) and some applications including willful false statements. We also note that this window was intended more for commercial translators since it involved auctions, the non-commercial applicants dominated the filing window (since they are not subject to auction fees).

You wonder, why is REC Networks very concerned about media ownership in the non-commercial arena, especially when a non-commercial station has nothing to ``gain``? It's all about localism.

REC Networks is one of several organizations that is involved in the advocacy and advancement of Low Power FM (LPFM) broadcast stations. Unlike the translators, LPFM stations are originated from local organizations, both faith based and secular. These stations are properly designed as not to cause interference to full power broadcast stations.

Unfortunately, the LPFM service was substantially affected by a ``pork`` amendment to a District of Columbia spending bill. This amendment, titled the ``Radio Broadcast Protection Act`` imposed additional restrictions on the placement of LPFM stations. Even though the Commission's own research as well as research performed by independent organizations proved that no interference would happen to full power stations without the restrictions. The bill was very heavily promoted by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). The NAB used information based on early-70's technology and provided Congress with a CD that had a ``simulation`` of what LPFM `interference` to full power stations would sound like.

As a result of the bill, Congress has ordered the FCC to conduct an independent study using real world stations. This study has been completed. The LPFM community is awaiting the outcome of the results.

REC Networks provides various database services to current and aspiring low power broadcasters. This is provided on a ``shareware`` basis. If they appreciate what we have done, they can donate. Trust me, I do not make a living off of LPFM.

Since you are considering introducing a ``Reclaiming The Public Airwaves Act``, we need to look at any or all of the following points to include in an omnibus restructure of local broadcasting rules:

1. ORDER THE FCC TO ESTABLISH A NEW ``DISTANT TRANSLATOR`` SERVICE. The Distant Translator Service would be designed to ``provide primary public radio services into remote and isolated areas by broadcasting the signal of a radio station from a very distant community``. The



definition of ``distant`` would be a primary station that is over 400km from the translator. All existing non-commercial translators that meet that criteria would be reclassified into the Distant Translator Service. A Distant Translator would be considered ``secondary`` in relation to LPFM stations. This means that if an LPFM station wants to come on the air and there is no space on the dial for the station, the LPFM applicant can displace (or ``bump``) a Distant Translator. In areas that are truly remote, there would not be any displacement. [ED. due to enough channels available.] The goal here is that a local signal should have priority over a distant signal.

2. ORDER THE FCC TO RELEASE THE RESULTS OF THE ``3RD ADJACENT CHANNEL`` STUDY ORDERED UNDER THE RADIO BROADCAST PROTECTION ACT (RPBA).

The FCC would release the findings of MITRE and Comsearch, the contractor and subcontractor who did the study to Congress and the general public.

2A. IF THE RPBA RESULTS ARE FAVORABLE, THE FCC SHALL REINSTATE ALL LPFM APPLICATIONS THAT WERE DISMISSED ON MARCH 17, 2003.

3. ORDER THE FCC TO IMPOSE NEW REGULATIONS THAT PUT LPFM STATIONS ON AN EQUAL PLAYING FIELD WITH NON-DISTANT TRANSLATORS as it relates to interference protections afforded to full power stations. Also, Congress should order that the FCC impose rulemaking that will protect 10 watt Low Power FM stations (LP-10). Currently, translators can ``bump`` an LP-10 station. A filing window has not yet opened for LP-10 stations.

4. INCLUDE LEGISLATION THAT WOULD REMOVE TELEVISION CHANNEL 6 (82-88 MHZ) FROM THE ``CORE`` TELEVISION SPECTRUM AND RE-ASSIGN THIS SPECTRUM TO THE EXPANSION OF LOWER POWER FM BROADCAST AND LPFM STATIONS.

As TV stations are currently going through the Digital TV (DTV) conversion, they are being given an alternate channel to transition to. Once the DTV transition is complete, they can transition back to their original channel or they can stay on their digital channel assignment. Because of the potential interference to non-commercial FM stations (Channel 6 is adjacent to the FM band) and due to other technical reasons, Channel 6 (as well as many of the TV channels 6 and below) are undesirable for DTV use. [Currently, there is only one DTV station assigned to Channel 6. Another DTV Channel 6 in Alaska is petitioning the FCC to change channels.] REC is asking that the Channel 6 spectrum be changed to FM broadcast to create 30 new channels on the FM band. In areas with a DTV Channel 5, about 18 of the channels can be assigned. Radio receivers are readily available as this spectrum is the FM broadcast band in Japan. Stations in this band

would be restricted to 1,000 watts with an antenna height of 100 meters above average terrain. No translators would be allowed.

5. ORDER THE FCC TO AMEND THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES (47 CFR 1) TO ALLOW FOR MORE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND LOCAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE FM AND TV TABLE OF ALLOTMENTS PROCESS.

For commercial FM and TV stations, before a new station can be established, someone must petition the FCC to amend the table of allotments to add the channel to the community. The petitioner is under a burden to prove the community qualifies for allotments. Current administrative practices (specifically, the Ex-parte rules) restrict public access to the allotment process. This is done through severe restrictions on electronic filing and service requirements that are no longer necessary in this computer age. REC is asking that Part 1 be revised to allow for electronic filing in allotment cases, not to require service unless the pleading is specifically proposing to change someone else's facility. REC feels that Congress should investigate current FCC practice that permits the owner of a rural broadcast station to move their station closer to a major city while reducing or eliminating local radio service in the rural community. REC would like to see a Congressional investigation into the Commission's ongoing policy of determining community independence from a major metro area by applying ``Faye and Richard Tuck``. The ``Tuck`` analysis is supposed to protect rural towns from using their communities as city of license in order to program to a major city. Pahump (Las Vegas), Nevada is an excellent example of this abuse. In addition, Congress should order the FCC to impose a limit on the number of petitions to amend the Table of Allotments by an individual or organization to a fixed amount in a 365 day period. REC recommends 3. In the alternate, require that all petitioners to amend the FM or TV Table of Allotments to submit financial statements stating that they are financially capable of constructing and operating the station themselves.

6. THE FCC MUST BE ORDERED TO RESCIND ALL APPLICATIONS FILED DURING THE MARCH 2003 TRANSLATOR FILING WINDOW AND IMPOSE RESTRICTIONS SIMILAR TO WHAT LPFM WENT THROUGH IN OUR FILING WINDOWS.

Besides many of the defective applications, some organizations filed for stations on multiple channels. For example, Calvary Chapel of Twin Falls filed for 9 different channels in El Centro, CA. LPFM was limited to one channel in their filings. REC feels that the translator window be reopened with a reminder that LP-100 stations (including applications that are not on the air) must be protected. In addition, translator applications would be limited to one channel per location and that the number of applications are restricted to whatever ownership restrictions are imposed in this legislation.

The bottom line here is that we have Clear Channel-like situations in the non-commercial arena. These issues need to be addressed in any legislation that takes place. Any legislation must be written in a way that it does not appear to be against religious broadcasting. Even though REC is a secular organization, we support LOCAL religious LPFM stations. We feel that a local religious station should have priority over a religious ``chain`` organization.

Remember, these local LPFM religious and secular stations are required to have the proper equipment at their stations to receive weather warnings and Amber Alerts (via the Emergency Alert System).

Currently, there is still one possible channel for a future LPFM station in Kingston. As a result of actions, such as the translator filing window mentioned above, the following New York communities have lost their chances of ever getting an LPFM station: Jamestown, Saratoga Springs, Amsterdam, Oswego, Gloversville, Olean, Fulton, Corning, Port Jervis, Johnstown and Brockport among many others.

If you want more localism in radio, this is what we need to do. If you have any questions about this information. I am willing to work with you to help identify these issues further and assist in the writing of any legislation.

REC Networks has a lot of information about LPFM as well as information on other organizations who are also involved in this effort. Please visit our website at <http://www.recnet.com/lpmfinfo> for more information.

Together we can put the word ``local`` back into radio (Rich Eyre for REC Networks, P O Box 40816, Mesa AZ 85274-0816, cc to DX LISTENING DIGEST)

**\*\* U S A. ACT NOW TO PROMOTE MEDIA DIVERSITY**

On June 2, the FCC voted to undermine democracy by drastically cutting back media ownership rules that protect the American people. These changes will allow media conglomerates to become even bigger, and will reduce the ability of Americans to receive information from many points of view, and diminish the amount of serious local journalism.

After this decision, a single company could own 8 radio stations, two TV stations, the cable company, and the local newspaper in one city. When a single company controls many media outlets, this makes unpopular viewpoints more difficult to be heard, weakening debate on important public issues.

This action represents an unprecedented failure to protect the free flow of information upon which democracy depends.

Thanks to the public's amazing efforts thus far, the FCC's decision can be overturned. TOGETHER, WE CAN REVERSE THE FCC AND PROTECT AMERICAN DEMOCRACY.

On June 19, the Senate Commerce Committee will be considering legislation to reverse much of the FCC's decision. Please contact your Senators to ask them to overturn what the FCC did on June 2.

Consumers Union has set up a site that will let you contact your representatives in Congress simply and easily:  
[http://capwiz.com/consumersunion/mail/oneclick\\_compose/?alertid=2444056](http://capwiz.com/consumersunion/mail/oneclick_compose/?alertid=2444056)

Other ways to communicate with Congress:

You can find your Senators using <http://www.senate.gov/>

Also check out <http://www.moveon.org> and <http://www.commoncause.org> for information and activities on this issue.

Information about the issue:

See Media Access Project's web page:  
<http://www.mediaaccess.org/programs/diversity/index.html#overview>

The New York Times has built a special section about the media ownership rules:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/business/businessspecial/index.html>

Recent articles:

FCC Votes to Ease Media Ownership Rules  
By Frank Ahrens, Washington Post, June 2, 2003  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A3076-2003Jun2.html?nav=hptop\\_](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A3076-2003Jun2.html?nav=hptop_)

Includes a sidebar with links to ownership rules and all the FCC Commissioners' statements.

Michael Powell and the FCC: Giving Away the Marketplace of Ideas  
By Tom Shales, Washington Post, June 2, 2003  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1424-2003Jun1.html?nav=hptop\\_](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1424-2003Jun1.html?nav=hptop_)

Cheryl A. Leanza, Deputy Director, Media Access Project  
(via John Broomall, WTFDA via DXLD)

\*\* U S A. An article from today's LA Times on how the FCC's recent

rulings are making for some unusual political alignments in Washington. . . . 73, Harry Helms, NV, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

FCC RULING PUTS RIVALS ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH --- Public opinion, political self-interest spur many in Congress to unite against new media rules. By Jube Shiver Jr., Richard Simon and Edmund Sanders Times Staff Writers

June 9 2003 WASHINGTON --- Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer of California and Republican Sen. Trent Lott of Mississippi rarely find themselves on the same side of the aisle. The complete article can be viewed at: <http://www.latimes.com/la-fi-newfcc9jun09234923,0,713587.story> (via Harry Helms, DXLD)

\*\* U S A. Re: [NRC-am] Clear Channel acquires FCC

Is there anyone on the list who hasn't already seen this a dozen times? At the risk of being accused of being thin-skinned, I'd suggest that the constant drumbeat of anti-Clear Channel diatribes diverts attention from the real problems with the regulatory process.

Clear Channel is a big company, yes.

Clear Channel took advantage of changes in the ownership rules (which took place under a White House that was not so easily controlled by Clear Channel PAC money as the current occupant is) to build the largest radio group in history, yes.

A lot of good radio people are out of work because of those changes, yes.

BUT --- would it have been any different if another big media company had gotten there first? Do you really believe that if there were no Clear Channel, and Viacom/CBS/Infinity/Westinghouse or GE/NBC or Disney or Citadel or Cumulus had gotten to 1200 stations first, that somehow each of those stations would have a live jock on the air all night, a news department of twelve and a playlist of 2400 tunes by local artists? Because I don't - and I think the relentless kneejerk bashing of Clear Channel in particular provides a useful smokescreen for a lot of other operators who are actually a lot worse for the business in the long run, not to mention diverting attention from the regulatory changes that were really behind so many of the changes that so many of us dislike in radio?

We know --- because we see the posts here --- that Clear Channel's engineers try very hard to be DXer-friendly. (Thanks, Paul Jellison!) We know --- because we hear it --- that when Clear Channel AM stations stay on day power or fail to ID, it's a rare slip-up and it's taken

care of promptly as soon as it's pointed out. Does Bishop Willis do that? (Fred V. --- I know you like to point out the problems WIMA has with its automation in Lima, but tell me honestly: who runs the cleaner AM signal in town - WLJM?)

Clear Channel has been a major skeptical force in the industry where AM IBOC is concerned. That should (but won't) earn it the applause of DXers everywhere.

And on a personal level, 100000watts.com --- which I know many NRC members use and enjoy, not to mention depending upon as a source for updates for DXN and the Log - was saved from closure by M Street, which is majority owned by Clear Channel, and with whom I'm now negotiating to make sure our club has continued free access to the site. I didn't see Citadel or Susquehanna or Saga stepping forward to pay me for a year to keep the site running. Did I miss something?

I'm pretty certain that I'm far from the only one on the list or in the club who counts Clear Channel as an important client or an employer. (FM and TV DXers all know the name of Girard Westerberg; in addition to being our new hero of DTV skip reception, where do you think he works? Yep, he's the director of engineering for Clear Channel in Lexington, Kentucky. Dave Gleason? Hispanic Broadcasting, in which Clear Channel is a major investor. I'm sure there are others as well who have escaped my attention.)

(And Saul [Chernos], I don't mean ANY of this as a slam on you. You know that I know your politics, and vice versa - but don't you really mean to be picking on Rogers or Bell GlobeMedia? Talk about your BIG conglomerates... :- ) s (Scott Fybush, NY, June 8, NRC-AM via DXLD)

As an active AM QSLer I have also observed that the Clear Channel stations are among the best responders to reception reports. In the past 3 years I have received 100% response on reception reports to CC stations while my overall average is about 35%. Since this seems to be pretty wide spread in the CC system, I have to wonder if someone high up in CC made a declaration that caused this (Patrick Griffith, NONNK CBT CBNT, Westminster, CO, USA, <http://community.webtv.net/AM-DXer/> <http://community.webtv.net/NONNK/> ibid.)

RADIO LEFT OUT OF RELAXED RULES  
By JENNIFER 8. LEE, June 9, 2003

WASHINGTON -- It happened in June, but for much of the media industry it might as well have been Christmas morning last Monday when Michael K. Powell, the Federal Communications Commission's chairman, and two of his Republican colleagues dispensed many of the gifts that had been on industry wish lists.

Despite the sweeping deregulation the F.C.C. enacted by a 3-to-2 vote along partisan lines, however, one medium was left out of the celebration: radio. Not only were radio ownership caps left in place, some of the restrictions were effectively tightened.

How radio got left out of the party is more a tale of politics than of business. And the story almost exclusively centers on Clear Channel Communications, the company that began rising from obscurity in 1996, when radio ownership caps were raised, to amassing nearly 1,250 stations. As it has grown into the nation's largest radio company, owning more than 10 percent of the commercial stations in the United States, Clear Channel has drawn the wrath of musicians, who accuse it of using its concert division to strong-arm musicians, and the scrutiny of Congress, where many members contend that the company has engaged in anticompetitive practices.

Although Clear Channel is widely respected on Wall Street, in Washington good business necessarily means practicing good politics, especially for the media business. Politicians, after all, depend on local media outlets to reach constituents through both advertising and news coverage. And as much as it purports to be independent, the F.C.C. is a political creature, influenced by public opinion and pressure from Capitol Hill.

These are fundamentals that Clear Channel evidently grasped too late. The F.C.C. ruling last week will make it much more difficult for Clear Channel to continue its longstanding strategy of growth through station acquisitions.

"Everyone, regardless of party, is running away from Clear Channel as fast as they can," said John Dunbar of the Center for Public Integrity, who has put together a searchable database of media ownership at <http://www.openairwaves.org>. "They've had a terrible run of publicity."

The company opened a Washington office only last December more than a year after it started drawing criticism for homogenizing radio programming across the country, particularly in smaller markets, where the company sometimes broadcasts disc jockeys who may be thousands of miles away.

Now the company has three former Capitol Hill aides working as lobbyists, including Andrew Levin, who worked in the House for the Michigan Democrat John D. Dingell.

But the real power of lobbying is in preventing issues from becoming an open debate, and by the time Clear Channel had assembled its

Washington team, the debate had long become public. The best its team could do was limit the damage.

Clear Channel did not fare well under the glare. When Lowry Mays, its chief executive, testified at the Senate Commerce committee in January, he had to listen to harsh rebukes from the Senators. His defensive replies to questions about the company's policy on payola and its commercial monopoly in Minot, N.D., failed to resonate with the inquisitors. "We have zero tolerance for pay-for-play," Mr. Mays said, even as Don Henley of the Eagles testified that musicians were often billed by record labels for promotional costs charged by radio stations.

Because Congressional hearings are as much show as substance, nuanced explanations, even if they hold true, do not make for good sound bites. "Once these allegations get made on Capitol Hill, if they are not refuted with the truth, they become like an urban legend," Mr. Levin said in a telephone interview.

As Clear Channel wants the story to be told, it is a capitalist success built largely by one entrepreneur, Mr. Mays, through smart, aggressive acquisitions. The company casts itself as a savior, reviving struggling radio stations and diversifying formats to better serve listeners around the country.

Why pick on the radio industry? the company asks. The lobbyists wave ownership charts for the recording, film and cable businesses, showing that radio is the least concentrated media sector. But Clear Channel, despite controlling only about 10 percent of the commercial radio market, stands so far above the second- and third-largest companies Cumulus Media, with 250 stations and Infinity Broadcasting, with 180 that it acts as a lightning rod for fears about big media. In the politically charged atmosphere leading up to the Iraq invasion, the company's management in San Antonio was accused of coordinating the Clear Channel stations across the country to rally support for the war. Though the executives denied any active role in the pro-war rallies promoted by some of the company's individual stations, the controversy highlighted the potential political power that can come with media consolidation.

In many ways, Clear Channel's naivete resembles the early political trip-ups of Microsoft, another company that grew huge and found itself unprepared for life in the spotlight of public opinion and government scrutiny. Over time, Microsoft established a Washington presence and formed a political strategy.

Clear Channel, too, is reacting to pressure. In April, it announced it would cut ties with the independent promoters whose activities are



sometimes accused of skirting antipayola laws.

So what exactly do last week's F.C.C. actions mean for the radio industry? One effect involves the maximum number of stations a company can own in a single local market a number that in many cases will shrink under the commission's new methodology. Under the old system, which defined a local market by the reach and overlap of radio waves from adjacent markets, Ithaca, N.Y., was considered to have at least 32 commercial radio stations, which allowed any one company to own up to 7 stations there. But under the new method of counting, Ithaca is considered to have only 9 commercial stations, and any single company can own no more than 5.

Though the F.C.C. is not requiring radio companies to give up any stations they already own, the companies say the tighter limits will make it hard to continue expanding to achieve the economies of scale they see as necessary to be profitable.

But the F.C.C. did give the radio industry a few consolation prizes. The new rules, for instance, will increase the overall station count in many local markets by including noncommercial broadcasters, like Christian and educational stations, which in some cities could allow a company to own a few more stations.

But Clear Channel's competitors say the net effect of the F.C.C.'s new rules will make it even more difficult now for them to catch up with the industry leader. And many industry analysts agree.

Clear Channel, though, viewed itself as the victim of an F.C.C. political sacrifice last week as the commission made regulatory life easier for newspaper and television companies. "They needed to have something to point to and say, 'We've tightened the rules in this area, so obviously we've done a balanced review,' " Mr. Levin said. "They needed to have a scapegoat."

Copyright 2003 The New York Times Company (via Mike Cooper, DXLD)

\*\* U S A. [Before seeing previous issue clearing this up]. Dear Glenn, I'm forwarding this reply I received from Jim Allison, the Program Director at WGMS in Washington. His message was in response to an inquiry I placed after I had heard on World Of Radio that WGMS would be changing format to Fox News simulcasts. While I'm aware that stations do not always make format/ownership changes public, I thought his remarks were worthy of passing on to you and your listeners in case what he says is indeed true, and thus one more Classical music station is safe from extinction, for the time being anyway. Thanks so much for World Of Radio. I tune in every week. Regards, (Jake Longwell, Dundee, New York)

Note: forwarded message attached.

Message: Dear WGMS,

Hello, my name is Jake Longwell. I am 23 years old and reside in the Finger Lakes region of New York state. I am a proud fan of your station thanks to your internet broadcast. And I am writing to you with regard to some rather disturbing news I have recently heard.

I am aware that the FCC has now allowed for even more consolidation with regard to Radio/Television ownership. And as a result your parent company will be selling the station to Fox, who will in turn convert WGMS to an all-news station.

Is this indeed going to take place? And might there be anything WGMS listeners can do to prevent the format change? Do you think it might do some good to send letters of protest to Fox or other parties involved?

If your station IS changing format, I think it is very unfortunate. There are very few stations like WGMS, and the loss of one more will make it even harder to enjoy Fine Arts programming.

Jake Longwell, Dundee, New York

Thank you for your message; I'm glad you enjoy our online broadcast. I'm curious as to where you heard the rumor you mentioned; we are certainly not changing format here at Classical 103.5 nor being sold. But I thank you for expressing your concern. Thank you for your message and thanks for listening to Classical 103.5 WGMS.  
(Jim Allison, Program Director, Classical 103.5 WGMS and classical1035.com via Longwell, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

\*\* U S A. EL GOBIERNO DE EE.UU. ORDENA UN ESTUDIO SOBRE EL ESPECTRO RADIOFÓNICO  
5 de junio, 2003 Actualizado: 6:18 PM hora de Nueva York (2218 GMT)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) -- El gobierno estadounidense ordenó el jueves un largo y exhaustivo estudio de cómo hacer más eficiente el uso de las codiciadas ondas radiofónicas por parte del estado y la industria inalámbrica para todo tipo de actividades, desde servicios de telefonía móvil a operaciones militares.

El presidente George W. Bush pidió al Departamento de Comercio que realice la revisión que determinará las maneras de mejorar el manejo de los escasos recursos y hacer las recomendaciones para mejorarlos.

``Debemos destrabar el valor econ mico y el potencial empresarial de los activos del espectro estadounidense, a la vez que se asegura que est  disponible el suficiente espectro para respaldar funciones cr ticas del gobierno'', dijo Bush en un memor ndum enviado a las agencias gubernamentales.

La industria comercial tiene un apetito casi insaciable por m s ondas radiof nicas, especialmente las compa  as de telefon a m vil que ofrecen servicios de acceso a Internet de alta velocidad y puntos de acceso inal mbrico a la red, conocidos como Wi-Fi.

Sin embargo, se han enfrentado con la fuerte competencia del gobierno estadounidense, que recientemente ha exigido m s espectro para cubrir las nuevas necesidades militares y de seguridad.

El Congreso ya est  considerando una propuesta de administraci n para dar m s disponibilidad de las ondas a los usuarios comerciales, al crear un fondo de fideicomiso que obtendr a sus ingresos de subastas del espectro y usarlos para cubrir los costos de trasladar las operaciones del gobierno a otras ondas.

El Departamento de Comercio formar  un grupo de tareas conformado por los usuarios principales del gobierno, que examinar a los procesos, procedimientos y pol ticas para el uso efectivo del espectro.

Un segundo grupo ver  y discutir  el uso de las ondas por parte de las entidades no gubernamentales y har  recomendaciones para mejorarlas.

Copyright 2003 Reuters Limited. Derechos Reservados (via CNN via Ariel Crocco, Conexi n Digital via DXLD)

**\*\* U S A. KHPY RADIO CAT LICA EL SEMBRADOR NOW AUDIOSTREAMING AND ON THE AIR ON WEEKENDS**

Burbank, California, June 1 (CRU) --- KHPY Radio Cat lica El Sembrador 1670 AM has begun audiostreaming at its website, <http://www.elsembradorministries.com> using Real Player. In his June letter to members, supporters, and listeners of El Sembrador, Canal ESNE-TV, y KHPY, founder Noel D az wrote, ``Miracles and a miracle in development is what we could see this past May 17 and 18. If Jesus performed prodigies and miracles, the miracle in development is that of buying the radio station that we now call Radio Cat lica El Sembrador. The faith and generosity of each one of the people who took a great step forward, saying that here is my Seed of God, has really impacted me. There is no doubt that we are making history in this part of the world. Catholics are not asleep because Jesus lives in our hearts. A thousand tanks for your fidelity in this work of evangelization, together we will continue bringing Jesus to those who

have not known him as Lord and Savior in their lives.``

The program schedule on the website says 6:30 a.m. to midnight Monday through Friday, but Catholic Radio Update heard the programming on the weekends, too. A disc jockey with Hispanic Catholic contemporary music closed at noon Sunday, followed by Padre Pedro Nuñez's ``Mensaje`` program from New Orleans, and then what sounded like an Hispanic Catholic Charismatic meeting. The Spanish Catholic contemporary was to have resumed Sunday evening at 8 o'clock, Pacific time.

KHPY Radio Católica El Sembrador 1670 AM was launched at the suggestion of the owner, Delbert L. Van Voorhis, and with a quarter-million dollar gift from Hispanic parents whose daughters were killed by a truck driver allegedly driving under the influence of drugs. El Sembrador Ministries originally began leasing the station Mondays through Fridays, and is looking for 8,000 local Hispanic families who will contribute \$1,000 each (``Seeds of Gold``) to raise the \$8 million to purchase the expanded-band AM station. KHPY covers almost all of the Los Angeles metropolitan area day and night, and has a special authorization to maintain its 10,000 watts during night time hours because of poor ground conductivity. Re-engineering of the station once it is purchased will allow the station to cover the entire Los Angeles metro area, the largest Hispanic population in the country and the second largest Mexican city in terms of population, after México City.

#### Database

RiversideñSan BernardinoñLos Angeles: KHPY Radio Católica El Sembrador 1670 AM Moreno Valley (10,000 watts day, directional; 9,000 watts night, directional, different pattern). Format: Hispanic Catholic. Delbert L. Van Voorhis. Leased by El Sembrador Ministries, Inc. 6:30 a.m. to midnight. Ministerio El Sembrador, 2636 N. Ontario St., Burbank, CA 91504. Tel.: (818) 260-0222, fax 557-7796. E-mail: [elsembrador1@aol.com](mailto:elsembrador1@aol.com). Website: <http://www.elsembradorministries.com> Noel Díaz, president. Audiostreams using Real Player. El Sembrador also operates the ESNE satellite television channel. (In the Dioceses of San Bernardino and Orange, and Archdiocese of Los Angeles) (Mike Dorner, Catholic Radio Update June 8 via DXLD)

\*\* U S A. There is a solution coming to many of AM's reception problems: HD Radio. This new system of digital transmission will, with a digital receiver, increase both the area in which you can receive our station and the audio quality of your reception. With one of the new AM digital receivers our station will have the audio quality and frequency response of FM. Classical 1360 AM will begin broadcasting, in addition to our analog signal, a Digital signal in the next few months. Consumer receivers will be in the market later this year. We'll keep you informed as to when and where.

Due to popular demand we are currently developing a section where you can listen to WKAT over the internet. We anticipate launching this feature shortly, but in the meantime you can still find us at 1360 on your AM dial (WKAT 1360 Miami FL, <http://www.classical1360.com/> June 8 via DXLD)

**\*\* U S A. RADIO FREE GOMER --- WHY WOULD DALLAS BROADCAST CLASSICAL MUSIC TO RURAL METH LABS? BY JIM SCHUTZE**

Phew. This talk about changing up the city-owned radio station sure has some odor to it. A group of people in the radio business have offered to "swap towers" with WRR-FM, the city-owned classical music station. WRR gets one of their broadcast towers and some money. They get the WRR tower. You and I, we might ask ourselves why a group of people in the radio business would want to swap towers with the city's station.

I guess to be fair we must allow for a range of possibilities: 1) Tower swapping is a relaxing hobby. 2) A voice from the sky has told the radio people, "Go, sell what you have and swap your radio towers to the poor." 3) They stand to make big-time moolah on the deal. . . <http://www.dallasobserver.com/issues/2003-05-29/schutze.html/1/index.html>

**RADIO BBQ --- WHY DOES EVERYBODY WANT TO EAT WRR? BY JIM SCHUTZE**

OK. Let's just cut to the ethical chase on this whole stupid WRR radio station tower-swap deal. This is ridiculous. The city council needs to put some people in chairs, turn on the bright lights and the tape recorders and ask some straight questions . . . <http://www.dallasobserver.com/issues/2003-06-05/schutze.html/1/index.html> (both via Current, DXLD)

**\*\* VENEZUELA.** Seg'n una promoci3n al aire de Radio Nacional de Venezuela, el audio de la emisora est. disponible en la p.gina web: <http://www.gobiernoenlinea.gov.ve> No se ofrecen m.s detalles. Saludos, (Ad'n Gonz.lez. Catia La Mar, VENEZUELA, June 9, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

There are links to two services, CANAL CLASICO and CANAL INFORMATIVO. I tried one and it took so long to load, I punched the other, but in a few minutes one started playing, then joined by the other, both playing at the same time on embedded Windows media player. Sounded like the same speaker, and perhaps identical message, as, bemused, I let them both play on. The timer is displaying five \*hours\* as the length. Enough (Glenn Hauser, OK, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

**\*\* VIETNAM [non].** Was away from my noise-infested Center City Philadelphia home location on Sunday night, so had especially good

reception of Voice of Vietnam (Sackville relay) on 6175 kHz Started listening to the Vietnamese broadcast after Monday 0200Z, and enjoyed picking out a few words I remembered from my Vietnam tour in 1966-67 (courtesy U.S. Army). At 0230Z, the English-language "The Sunday Show" came on, with a lovely half hour talking about and playing recordings of the bamboo flute in Vietnamese music. English-language site: [http://www.vov.org.vn/2003\\_06\\_09/Defaultv.htm](http://www.vov.org.vn/2003_06_09/Defaultv.htm)  
(Saul Broudy, Philadelphia, PA USA, June 9, swprograms via DXLD)

UNIDENTIFIED. Here are some catches made in the countryside some 70 km South of Moscow in the period of June 7-8, 2003 with SONY ICF7600G and its telescopic antenna:

3285 UNID, Club (discoteque)-like music at 2035 June 7. 3/2 4 3/2 22. Sync detect and SSB weren't able to improve the quality of reception. Really bad. 2105\*. Before closing down anthem-like melody and some words (ID?). I recorded this fragment, I must listen more carefully my recording... I caught this strange voice for the second time this season. Maybe Madagaskar? Your opinions?

4760 Venezuela? Radio Frontera? At 0120 June 8 in Spanish with frequent mentions of ``desarollo`` (development) and ``colombiano``, weak. Totally disappeared at 0150. As far as I know, this station is located in San Cristóbal, Tachira on the very board of Venezuela and Colombia. I recorded something like announce, but didn't look for it clearly yet. (TO COME....) (Artyom Prokhorov, Russia, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD)

~~~~~  
PUBLICATIONS  
+++++

LISTEN TO THE WORLD --- ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRANSMISSIONS

01. Amigos: Talvez alguns j. conhecam, ou n.,o.Existe uma lista de emissoras que transmitem em inglês com links para as p.ginas na web das emissoras, muito boa e bem atualizada. Visitem <http://www.swl.nu/listen/#bottom>  
(Alexandre Deves Sailer, Viam,,o / RS, radioescutas via DXLD)

DRM  
+++

BBC WORLD SERVICE TO JOIN DRM'S INAUGURAL BROADCASTS ON JUNE 16, 2003

Geneva -- BBC World Service's live, daily Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) broadcasts on the short-wave and medium-wave/AM band will be a part of

DRM's Inaugural Broadcasts event on June 16th, 2003. The event will take place at the Chateau de Penthes in Geneva, debut during the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC 2003). It marks the moment at which leading broadcasters transmit local, national and international DRM broadcasts simultaneously.

Since the beginning of the DRM field trials in January 2000, the BBC World Service has been regularly broadcasting digital test signals from Rampisham (operated by VT Merlin Communications in the UK). At the beginning of this year, two transmission hours were added to the daily test schedule, broadcast from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's transmission site in Sackville, targeting the East and West Coast of the USA. In April, a daily 6-hour-long transmission slot towards Western Europe was added (0900-1500 UT on 7320 kHz) as well as a daily Russian language hour to Western Russia (1800-1900, 15215 kHz) in May 2003.

[via Sackville:] 0300-0400 UT on 11955 kHz and 2300-2400 on 9795 kHz

This month, BBC World Service is proud to announce the first regular high-power DRM service on medium-wave, broadcast from VT Merlin Communication's transmitter site at Orfordness (UK) on 1296 kHz. Initially, 6 daily programme hours will be transmitted towards the Benelux countries.

DRM's members will demonstrate DRM live transmissions in Geneva using various receivers, including a development receiver that supports diversity reception. Transmissions on two frequencies from Rampisham will be time-synchronised through a common DRM distribution system linked over the Hotbird 6 satellite, with the programmes coded and multiplexed in from Bush House control room.

``I'm convinced DRM will completely revolutionise broadcasting in the AM bands`` says John Sykes, Head of Transmission Services, and founder DRM Member. We are very excited by the potential this system offers to both broadcasters and radio listeners, not only in terms of quality, but more importantly, in ease of use. I hope radio manufacturers will take note of our commitment to DRM, and produce exciting and attractive digital radios which make best use of all services which are now being broadcast, be they analogue or digital.``

DRM members Deutsche Welle, Radio Netherlands, Voice of America, CBC/Radio Canada International, Swedish Radio International, Radio France, Radio Vaticana, DeutschlandRadio, T-Systems, TDF and Thales Broadcast & Multimedia have also announced their participation in DRM's Inaugural Broadcasts event.

## About BBC World Service

The BBC World Service is the world's leading international broadcaster, attracting audiences of 150 million listeners each week. It aims to be the best known and most respected voice in international radio broadcasting. Its values of accuracy, impartiality, objectivity, trust and internationalism are respected globally.

It is rapidly developing into a multimedia broadcaster, using radio and the internet, for all its 43 language services.

The BBC World Service is available globally on short wave; on FM in 140 capital cities; and selected programmes are carried on around 2,000 FM and MW radio stations around the world.

The BBC World Service's award-winning website <http://www.bbcnews.com> - contains extensive, interactive news services, with audiostreaming available in 43 languages. It also contains detailed information about World Service broadcasts, schedules and frequencies in all languages. At present over 100 million users access the World Service's website each month.

VT MERLIN COMMUNICATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN DRM'S INAUGURAL BROADCASTS  
on June 16, 2003

Geneva -- VT Merlin Communications will participate in the world's first, daily Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) broadcasts on June 16th, 2003. VT Merlin will be providing the DRM transmission platform for a number of international broadcasters, including BBC World Service, Wales Radio International and Christian Vision, as part of DRM's Inaugural Broadcasts event in Geneva during the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC 2003). VT Merlin has two high power short wave transmitters converted to DRM capability, which will deliver digital AM transmissions for Geneva and Western Europe. In addition, they will also be using their new DRM capable high power medium wave transmitter at their MF site in Orfordness, Suffolk, UK to carry BBC World Service DRM programming. The precise moment of the world's first DRM broadcasts will be marked at a spectacular reception at Geneva's Chateau de Penthes.

Peter Gordon, VT Merlin's Programme Manager, Digitalisation said: ``As a founder member of the DRM consortium, VT Merlin is very proud to be playing a high profile role in these inaugural DRM broadcasts. It marks the beginning of what we expect to be a revolutionary new technology for AM broadcasting. VT Merlin has made significant investment in its DRM platform and we look forward to demonstrating the full range of DRM's capabilities in Geneva, including AM



transmissions in near FM quality.``

VT Merlin Communications (formerly Merlin Communications) has been a DRM member since the consortium was formed in 1998.

#### About VT Merlin Communications

VT Merlin Communications, part of VT Group plc, is a leading provider of critical communications and broadcast services to customers in the broadcast, defence, space communications, emergency services and security sectors worldwide. Operating the world's leading short wave network, VT Merlin transmits over 1,000 hours of both short and medium wave broadcasts every day. VT Merlin's global network provides broadcasters with exceptional coverage of the world's most populous regions, and offers capacity to deliver your programmes globally. Currently VT Merlin broadcasts for major international broadcasters including BBC World Service, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, NHK (Radio Japan), Radio Canada International, Radio Netherlands and Voice of America.

Our range of critical communications services includes technical support services, communications facilities management, as well as project and programme management. VT Merlin has extensive experience in the design, build, operation, maintenance and support of critical transmission facilities worldwide. Customers include BBC World Service, the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD), European Space Agency (ESA) and QinetiQ.

#### CBC/RADIO CANADA INTERNATIONAL TO JOIN DRM'S INAUGURAL BROADCASTS ON June 16, 2003

Geneva -- DRM member Radio Canada International (RCI) will commence its live, daily Digital Radio Mondiale( (DRM()) broadcasts on June 16, 2003. Its transmissions will debut in conjunction with DRM's Inaugural Broadcasts event in Geneva, during the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC 2003). The precise moment of the world's first DRM broadcasts will be marked at a spectacular reception at Geneva's Chateau de Penthes.

The RCI content will be part of a programming stream taken from the existing CBC/Radio-Canada and RCI schedules, to be transmitted daily from CBC's short-wave site in Sackville, Canada. CBC will also transmit programs from DRM member broadcasters, including BBC World Service, Deutsche Welle, Radio Netherlands, Swedish Radio International and Radio Vaticana. In an internal communiqué, CBC noted that the bouquet of services to be transmitted from Sackville is intended to showcase the DRM technology to other major international

broadcasters, thereby fostering awareness and promoting rapid adoption of this new digital system.

CBC Transmission and RCI have been active in DRM's development, providing test and demonstration transmissions to different parts of the world. They have relayed DRM test transmissions of the BBC World Service, in English, from Sackville since January 2003.

#### DRM Members

DRM's members are Commercial Radio Australia (Australia); Nautel Ltd., Radio Canada International/CBC (Canada); Academy of Broadcasting Science of China (China); RIZ Transmitters (Croatia); HFCC (Czech Republic); ESPOL, HCJB World Radio (Ecuador); Digita Oy, Kymenlaakso Polytechnic (Finland); CCETT, Radio France, Radio France Internationale, TDF, Thales Broadcast & Multimedia (France); ADDX, APR, Atmel Germany GmbH, Coding Technologies GmbH, Deutsche Welle, DeutschlandRadio, DLM, Sender Europa 1, Fraunhofer IIS, Georg-Simon-Ohm ñ University of Applied Sciences Nuremberg, Innovationszentrum Telekommunikationstechnik GmbH IZT, IRT, Medienanstalt Sachsen-Anhalt/Digitaler Rundfunk Sachsen-Anhalt, Micronas GmbH, Robert Bosch GmbH, Sony International Europe, SWR Südwestrundfunk, TELEFUNKEN SenderSysteme Berlin AG, T-Systems International GmbH, University of Applied Sciences - FH Merseburg, University of Hannover, University of Ulm, VPRT (Germany); Antenna Hungaria, Communications Authority Hungary (Hungary); Basamad College, Tehran (Iran); Hitachi Kokusai Electric Ltd., JVC Victor Company of Japan, Ltd., NHK (Japan); Libyan Jamahiriya Broadcasting (Libya); Broadcasting Centre Europe (Luxembourg); Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (Malaysia); Nozema, Radio Netherlands, Technical University Delft (Netherlands); Radio New Zealand International (New Zealand); Voice of Nigeria (Nigeria); Telenor/Norkring (Norway); Radiodifusao Portuguesa (Portugal); RTRN/The Voice of Russia (Russia); Arab States Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia); Universidad del Pais Vasco, (Spain); Swedish Radio International (Sweden); EBU, International Committee of the Red Cross, ITU (Switzerland); Arab States Broadcasting Union (Tunisia); BBC, Christian Vision, VT Merlin Communications, QinetiQ, RadioScape Ltd., Roke Manor Research Ltd., WRN (U.K.); Dolby Laboratories Incorporated, Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation, Harris Broadcast Corporation, IBB/VOA, IDT Continental Electronics, Kintronic Laboratories, Inc., National Association of Short-wave Broadcasters, Sangean America, Inc., TCI, a Dielectric Company, Via Licensing Corporation (U.S.A.); and Radio Vaticana (Vatican City).

(from combined News Releases June 9 from DRM via DXLD)

#### CONVENTIONS & CONFERENCES

+++++

## WTFDA 2003 WESTERN NEW YORK UPDATE!

Hi folks! Your host committee for WTFDA 2003 Western New York is looking forward to welcoming you to our part of the world in just over one month's time. The rain has lifted, and it was a beautiful sunny 80 degrees here today.

The official deadline to make your room reservations at our host hotel, the Batavia Days Inn, is TOMORROW - Monday, June 9. You need to call the hotel directly (585-343-6000) and mention WTFDA to get our special \$72/night rate; after June 9, the hold on our block of rooms is released, and we can't guarantee that rate. (Remember, you can always make a reservation now and cancel it later if you're still not 100% sure you're coming.)

If you've made hotel reservations and haven't told me yet...please drop me a line and let me know!

You can now register for the convention itself as well. By check, send \$25, payable to "Dave Janowiak," to me at the address below. You can also register by PayPal at the WTFDA homepage, <http://wtfda.anarc.org> --- be sure to specify it's for the convention!

There's still a seat or two available for our big "pre-convention" event. On THURSDAY, JULY 10, we've arranged a rare tour of the FM/TV transmitter facilities at Toronto's CN Tower. Only ten lucky WTFDA'ers will get this experience, so if you're interested and haven't yet contacted me, please do so right NOW. We'll travel to Toronto in Jerry Bond's van (and another car, if there are enough of us), leaving Rochester at 8 AM Thursday and picking people up at the hotel in Batavia at about 8:40 AM, returning to Batavia around dinnertime. (Special thanks to Saul Chernos for setting this one up!)

Those arriving later on Thursday can attend a pre-convention dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Things get into full swing on FRIDAY, JULY 11, when we'll caravan to Buffalo to see "KB Radio 1520" and other radio sights of the Queen City. Our convention room at the Days Inn will also be open for those wishing to DX (equipment on hand will include at least one DTV tuner.) Later in the evening, Jim Renfrew will open his home (just a few minutes from the host hotel) and the big fields behind it for a picnic and DX'ing late into the night.

On SATURDAY, JULY 12, Tim McVey will host a morning tuner clinic for those who need narrow filters in their lives. In the afternoon, we'll head to Rochester for tours of several newly-renovated broadcast facilities. And in the evening, it's the nearly-legendary WTFDA

banquet, included in your \$25 registration fee, followed by friendly companionship and DX'ing in our convention room.

And on SUNDAY, JULY 13, the room will remain open in the morning for those still in town.

There won't be a DX convention of this magnitude in Western New York again until --- um, next year, when NRC comes to town. But don't wait for the AM guys (who'll have one whopping shindig of their own in Dallas/Fort Worth later in the year) --- come to Western New York and see what we have to offer!

So again: make those hotel reservations. Call or e-mail me with ANY questions. And get ready for the biggest DX experience in Western New York since the days of Ray Edge...

(I'm cc'ing this to the NRC AM and FM-TV lists; please feel free to pass it along to any other groups - ODXA, etc. - who should know about it!)

wtfda2003@fybush.com phone 585-442-5411 (10AM-10PM Eastern, no collect calls) send registrations to: 92 Bonnie Brae Ave, Rochester NY 14618 (Scott Fybush, NRC-AM June 8 via DXLD)

#### SUMMER GET-TOGETHERS IN THE PACIFIC NW

##### PHIL's SUMMER GET-TOGETHER

My summer Get-Together will be on Saturday, July 19 2003, beginning at 2 PM [UT -7]. Here's your chance to meet other radio listeners and talk about hobby stuff - medium wave, SWBC, utility, TV/FM, or whatever listening you like to do. Feel free to bring stuff like receivers, antennas, QSL cards, etc to show off or demonstrate. Also, bring your favorite junk food or drink.

My address is 9705 Mary Ave NW, Seattle WA. Mary Ave is between 14th and 15th NW. We are a couple of blocks North of Holman Road on Mary Ave. Please RSVP or if you have questions, my phone number is (206) 784-5145 --- or you can email me at: phil\_-@yahoo.com. [truncated]

#### GET-TOGETHER IN BC --- AUGUST 23 2003

Dan Sys's GTG will be held at 27423-32nd Avenue in the Aldergrove area of Langley, BC starting at Noon. This is 35 miles southeast of Vancouver on the #1 Freeway and 4 miles north of the Lynden-Aldergrove border crossing on Highway #13. E-mail: dsy-@yahoo.ca [truncated] or phone me at (604) 856-2130 for more details. Guest of honor will be Dario Monferini from Italy. Hopefully the weather will cooperate so we

can sit in the back yard and relate our radio experiences to each other while indulging in beverages and snacks. We'll pass the hat around for pizza later in the day (both from Phil Bytheway, June 9, IRCA via DXLD)

#### THE 10TH ANNUAL MADISON GET-TOGETHER FOR DXERS AND RADIO ENTHUSIASTS

will be held on Saturday, August 16, 2003. This year's hosts are Bill and Nina Dvorak, and the event will take place at their home, 501 Algoma Street Madison WI 53704-4812. Activities will begin at 1 PM and end when the last person leaves (come when you can and leave when you must).

What can you expect at this event? Good fellowship and lots of DX talk in an informal atmosphere. Please feel free to bring any equipment, QSL's, station souvenirs, log books or anything else that you would like to show to or share with the group. We encourage everyone to participate in a group photo, so bring along your camera.

Snacks and soft drinks will be provided at this event. If you prefer another beverage, please feel free to bring your own, and we will keep it cold for you. Dinner is planned at the Esquire Club at approximately 5 PM, and we will regroup at Bill and Nina's afterward.

For more information, contact Bill Dvorak at [dxerak.aol.com](mailto:dxerak.aol.com) or mail me at the above address. I can also be reached at 608-244-5497. When e-mailing, please include reference to the 10th Madison DX GTG in the subject line.

If you do plan to attend, please notify me beforehand for planning purposes. I can provide directions by e-mail, or if you prefer, I will send you a map that includes a handy list of accommodations.

A word about the GTG: The Madison area DXers have held this event in late August every year since 1994. We have brought together an average of 17 DXers per year, and over the years five states and the District of Columbia have been represented at the Madison GTG. Last year we had a record 26 DXers attend. This is an all-band event, and draws a diverse group of hobbyists. We hope that you can come, and look forward to seeing you!

Participation by WTFDA members has been strong in past years. Last year, eleven WTFDA'ers attended. Come and meet your fellow club members! 73 Bill & Nina

A note from Tim Noonan: Bill Dvorak and I have been alternating as hosts of this event, and according to that arrangement, I should be the host this year. While my commitment to the event remains as strong

as ever, developments in my life suggest that hosting will be difficult for us this year. My part-time employment since 1996 at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee will become full-time beginning this fall. As a result, we will move to the Milwaukee area this summer, and the move and settling into our new location will coincide with the get-together and the necessary preparations for it. Bill and Nina Dvorak have shown a kind understanding for our situation and have graciously offered to host this year. I commit to hosting the event in 2004, beginning a new tradition of ``Madison`` get-togethers alternating annually between Madison and Milwaukee (WTFDA via DXLD)

#### PROPAGATION

+++++

#### ANTIPODAL MEDIUMWAVE DX RECEPTION

The WYFR transmitter in Taiwan, 1557 kHz, heard again here in Brazil. More info and audio on <http://www.faiallo.org/taiwan2003.html>  
73's (Rocco Controneo, Rio de Janeiro, June 9, MWDX via DXLD)

Very impressive recording indeed! On the webpage you write:

``How can a medium wave signal jump over 18.438 km (11.523 miles), nearly the maximum possible distance on the Earth? Hard to say. Still, for the third year in a row, the winter solstice here in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, brought this incredible signal from the WYFR transmitter located in Taiwan, on 1557 kHz.``

I think the explanation for this phenomenon is quite simple: It's the antipodal-effect. Stations exactly on the other side of the globe should be a relatively easy catch. Imagine a station exactly on the North Pole using an omnidirectional antenna. In theory the rays would go into all directions, but there is exactly one point on the globe, where they should concentrate again: the South Pole! There one should expect quite high signal strength again, even if the distance is the highest possible. (Of course we all know, that propagation is a lot more complicated, but this abstract shows the principle of the antipodal-effect quite well).

Now, given that Taiwan and Rio de Janeiro are on the opposite sides of the globe (haven't checked that yet), this would be an explanation. By the way: A very interesting report on your Patagonian DX-pedition on [faiallo.org](http://faiallo.org)! 73's (Martin Elbe, Germany, *ibid.*)

Close to antipodal; actually the opposite of Rio is closer to Iwo Jima, about 2300 km ESE of Taiwan. If there is a MW transmitter on Iwo Jima (I doubt it), that would be worth pursuing in Rio (Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

I think it's more-less easy to explain: both (RX, TX) points are at terminator line. You'd explain more for yourself if doing minute-by-minute daily extended monitoring during few weeks at around 20-21z: how sharp S-peak is in time (how it changes from day-to-day). QSled them? Good luck. Regards, (Vlad Titarev, Ukraine, ibid.)

DTV OUTDISTANCES ANALOG TV?

Since I don't use a DTV decoder, I don't feel qualified to comment on matters concerning DTV.

However, I've seen a lot of DTV snow during the last couple of years. When I first saw the strange, bright, long-grained snow mixed with TV stations from the Great Lakes area via Es in May of 2000, I didn't report it to this list. My thought was it might be WKYC-DT, yet it could be another source of unknown RF interference. After seeing the snow a few more times I finally reported it to this list.

All Es to my location from the Great Lakes area has had periods of snow mixed with the signals these past three years. These days snow is also appearing here via Es from the west and northwest. Just tonight KNOP-2 North Platte was received mixed snow. [so KOTA-DT Rapid City?]

As I understand it, DTV was supposed to work well with lower ERP than analog TV requires. As for distances, it seems to me that this snow gets out via Es better than analog TV signals. The DTVs operate with very low ERP in comparison to the anlogs, yet that snow somehow travels comparable distances (Danny Oglethorpe, Shreveport, LA, June 8, WTFDA via DXLD)

Yes I have read much about the DTV "snow". I'm not sure I can identify it!! Snow is snow. I've had a few people explain it to me, but I'll be darned if I can see any difference. How could one be SURE it's from a DTV station? Especially considering that the Es we normally see is a complete mish-mash of staticky, snowy pictures with brief spurts of clearer picture --- enough to ID a station? I wish that one of you guys that have a web site would put up a picture of DTV snow as compared to just snow. Then we'd all be able to watch for it, or at least GUESS that what we're seeing is DTV snow (Guy T. Falsetti, Lockport, NY, ibid.)

Snow from a complete lack of signals is completely random. It's a random signal that can take on any amplitude at any instant. This snow is generated by random motion of electrons in the antenna, the receiver wiring, and various electronic components. The amplitudes it may take are relatively small.

Snow from a DTV station is mostly random. However, it can only take on one of eight specific amplitudes, and the use of a data randomizer guarantees that it *\*will\** use the lowest and highest permissible amplitudes at frequent intervals. This snow is generated by a high-powered transmitter; the amplitudes it may take are rather large.

The amplitude of a TV signal is reflected in the contrast. The contrast control on a TV literally attenuates the received signal --- literally throws some of it away as heat. (an automatic gain control protects you from having to change the contrast control setting when switching from a strong local station to a weaker, more distant station. But this gain control doesn't work with signals that don't have synchronization pulses --- digital signals, or for that matter, noise.)

So the point is, (as Danny mentioned) snow from a DTV station has higher contrast than snow from a lack of signals. The difference is subtle. I've found it most dramatic to use an old TV with a continuous (not click-stop) UHF tuner. Tune through a channel containing a local DTV station. You'll notice a distinct change in the character of the snow as you tune across the station. You may also notice a change in the character of the *\*audio\** noise --- it becomes louder.

I would *\*presume\** (I've never seen DTV snow via Es) that the effects of such a signal would be fairly apparent. In Danny's case he has a local on channel 3; I would imagine there would be some amount of adjacent-channel "splash" on 2 from this station. A strong DTV signal on channel 2 would cause that splash to disappear - the channel would appear completely blank. Does he routinely receive weak groundwave signals from channel 2 stations like Dallas, Tulsa, or Little Rock? These would vanish under a strong DTV signal as well. Finally, I suspect the disappearance of *\*all\** Es signals (especially if there was still strong Es CCI on channel 3 and/or higher channels) would be pretty conclusive evidence an Es signal was present.

One final note for scanner owners. DTV stations *\*do\** have a carrier signal. It's 310KHz above the bottom of the channel. (so for channel 2, it would be on 54.31MHz) Unfortunately it appears unmodulated (actually it's modulated with the 8VSB data) so you can't tell *\*which\** DTV station it's from, but you can confirm that it *\*is\** a DTV station that way.

One thing to remember is that DTV power figures are "apples" while analog are "oranges".

=====

The power of an analog TV station is measured at the peak of the synchronizing pulses.



When an analog station is transmitting video, the power radiated depends on the brightness of the picture at any given spot - the darker the picture, the more power radiated.

To make it easy for the TV set to find the synchronizing pulses, they're transmitted at considerably higher power. (the blackest part of the picture is transmitted at 75% of the transmitter's maximum power. Synchronizing pulses are transmitted at 100% power.) The \*times\* when the synchronizing pulses happen are also predictable; horizontal sync comes along 15,734.234 times per second, vertical 59.94 times a second.

Sync pulses are easy to find and are always of the same level. The \*average\* power of an analog transmitter (averaged over any period of more than 1/15,000 of a second) varies wildly depending on program material. If you watch an \*average\* power meter attached to an analog transmitter broadcasting program material (not a test pattern or other still image) you'll see the meter swing all over the place.

So analog TV power measurements are \*peak\* - the highest power the transmitter ever radiates.

=====

A digital TV station \*has no\* synchronizing pulses. The DTV transmitter output can assume one of eight permitted amplitudes at any given instant. A "data randomizer" ensures that it will assume each of these eight for an equivalent amount of time --- but you can't predict \*when\* each of these eight amplitudes will be used.

The point is that there are no signals of predictable amplitude in the DTV signal. Except for the "pilot carrier", but that's buried among the much stronger data signals and very difficult to measure the amplitude of accurately. At the same time, the power, averaged over any reasonable time, is constant --- doesn't vary with program material. (I've watched an average power meter attached to a DTV transmitter; it's just as rock-solid as a peak power meter on an analog transmitter.)

So DTV power measurements are \*average\* power, averaged over a few hundred milliseconds.

=====

What this means is that a DTV station running 40,000 watts average power is \*not\* running 1/5 the power of an analog station running 200,000 watts. Indeed, the stations are pretty much "at parity".

=====

I'm having a hard time drawing any conclusions about relative DTV and analog powers. We have four DTV stations in the Nashville market running approximately full power, and three operating at LPTV power levels under STA.

Three of the four full-power DTV stations [0] are somewhat more difficult to receive than their analog counterparts --- requiring that the antenna be pointed more-or-less in the right direction, while usable analog reception is possible all the way around.

The STA stations can be coaxed into delivering a stable DTV signal if the antenna is within about 20 degrees of the correct heading. On the other hand, when this is achieved I get a steady, perfect picture. Analog LPTVs at the same distance (and in one case on the same tower) are noisy and essentially unviewable.

[0] The fourth DTV station's transmitter is some 35 miles west of their analog counterpart, and that much closer to my location.

--

(Doug Smith W9WI, Pleasant View (Nashville), TN EM66,  
<http://www.w9wi.com> ibid.)

I think some DT signals get out very well in comparison to their analog counterparts. Two examples are WRTV-Indy and WCMH-Columbus. I believe both are running full-power on their DT signal. I can see both of them often when analog signals from the same market are quite weak. I haven't really noticed the DTV snow. I can't tell a difference, except the snow sometimes looks slightly darker than plain old analog snow. Typically when dealing with a weak signal, I'll use the WinTV-D to see if a signal is there, then dial it in on the Zenith, which will decode a weak signal better than the WinTV-D. (Glen Hale, location unknown, ibid.)

OFFSETS FOR MY TA DX - 7TH JUNE

Hi All, Many thanks for the e mails regarding my transatlantic TV reception last Saturday.

It's a similar thing with directions over here, we tend to beam south through north-east where most of the action should be, so we too could easily miss DX from the west. However, you may be interested in the following...

What helps us to spot these things here are a combination of two things and I am sure it will work for you guys too.

If you follow the spots on DXers.info and Kolombus, etc. you're half way there. Check for signs of TA activity and then link the audio output from your scanners to your PC and run Spectrum Laboratory software, or similar. <http://www.qsl.net/dl4yhf/spectral1.html>

This is what some of use over here. The beauty is you can "see" video

carriers at VERY low signal levels - way below the audio threshold in fact. If you see 50 Hz sidebands on a signal then you will see you may have a non-American signal - even on strengths which are still way too low to produce video! So, you may not necessarily need to be beaming west.

I see the 60 Hz sidebands of your carriers when looking for TA conditions. These carriers are clearly visible on Spectrum Lab even if I am beaming into Europe. You should be able to see these signals clearly yourself too, so there may be no need for you to be beaming west.

For the record, I thought I ought to state the actual offsets for you, so you could see which were at zero, - or +.

1015 55.259.973  
1030 55.250.028  
1049 55.260.174  
1051 55.240.075  
1135 55.240.068

I've got a full account of this reception, with some of the e mails received included at: <http://www.skywaves.info/tadx07-06-03.html>

Best wishes (John Faulkner, <http://www.skywaves.info> WTFDA via DXLD)  
####